

Bahia Vista Drive Gasoline Cleanup



Cleanup plans for Aug. 23 gasoline spill

The Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) is overseeing the cleanup of a gasoline spill on Bahia Vista Dr. in Bremerton. There is no longer a threat to human health at this site but the gasoline contamination in the soil needs to be addressed.

The cleanup plans include a legal agreement, called a Notice of Correction, between Ecology and the company responsible for the gasoline spill. The company, Harris Transportation of Portland Ore., is cooperating in the response to this incident.

Background

On the evening of Aug. 23, 2000 a Harris Transportation gasoline tanker truck had its trailer slide off the road and roll over into a deep ditch on Bahia Vista Drive just outside Bremerton. Although not seriously damaged in the accident, the trailer was laying on its side and gasoline leaked out through the hatch. A total of 731 gallons of gasoline leaked into the soil and water in the roadside ditch.

An emergency response was conducted that evening and into the next day involving fire department units from Bremerton and the P.S. Naval Shipyard, the Washington State Patrol, the U.S. Coast Guard, the U.S. EPA, Ecology, and the owners of the tanker truck along with their environmental contractor. The trailer was recovered without further loss of gasoline and the danger of flammable vapors or other hazards to the public eliminated.

Environmental conditions at Bahia Vista Drive

An environmental assessment of the gasoline contamination remaining in the soil is currently underway. Specific plans for the emergency remediation of potential threats to human health and the environment is also under discussion between Ecology and the responsible party.

Since the accident occurred in an area of extreme landslide hazard, this greatly limits the type of cleanup actions that can be safely used in this case. No excavation or other activities that would disturb the soil is possible.

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Using water to flush the gasoline out of the soil is also not possible, since this action would saturate surrounding soils with water just before seasonal rains begin again. One of the things that increases landslide hazard is water-saturated soils. That also adds to the weight on the soil, which may add to landslide hazards.

The small stream that flows through the ditch is not a fish habitat stream and there have been no wildlife concerns in the stream. While the ditch empties into Port Orchard Bay, there is not expected to be any significant impact to the marine environment. The stream does flow past a single-family residence and this is the primary concern in mitigating impacts from the spill.

Proposed cleanup actions

Feasible cleanup actions are being evaluated based on the severe geological constraints of the location, coupled with the need to monitor the gasoline as it is flushed out of the soil into the stream by rainwater. The major steps in the selected cleanup activities will include:

- Using hand tools to dig up small quantities of soil in the immediate location of the spill.
- Air monitoring in the area of the residence.
- Soil and water sampling in the ditch, and some ongoing water sampling when it starts raining.
- Taking necessary actions to reduce either water contamination or gasoline odors, depending on how much gasoline flushes out of the soil during rainstorms.

These cleanup actions provide a way of reducing the impacts of the spill on the neighborhood and the environment, without increasing the landslide hazard in the area.

What happens next

Air monitoring has already been conducted around the residence and no vapors or health concerns were discovered. Soil samples have been taken from the ditch and a culvert that runs under Bahia Vista Drive. The results of that sampling are expected soon. Some hand digging in the immediate area of the spill will begin very soon.

Specific plans for ongoing monitoring during rain events will be completed and formalized in an agreement between Harris Transportation and Ecology.

At this point, it is expected that there will be no further impact to the neighborhood from this spill other than occasionally having vehicles parked on the road as workers gather samples or inspect the ditch.